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STATE SERVICES AND NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DEFECTIVE VISION.

The Council of British Ophthalmologists have issued a report on the methods adopted in various parts of the British Isles for the education of children suffering from defective vision due to myopia or other causes (excluding the blind). The Council excludes from consideration those children who, on reaching adult life, will probably be economically blind, that is, "unable to do work for which sight is essential." In the opinion of the Council such children should be educated in schools for the blind. The Council considers that special educational facilities are required for those who have defective vision, and for whom the ordinary school education is unsuitable, e.g., cases of progressive myopia, defective vision due to corneal opacities, congenital abnormalities, &c. Classes which give the required facilities exist, and are termed by the Board of Education "schools for the partially blind." The Council thinks that this term is very undesirable; it gives offence to parents, and may leave a stigma detrimental to the child in after life. The term "myope class" is already in use, and connotes the purpose for which this form of education is designed. Such classes were established by the London Educational Authority in 1908. It has been found that the best interests of these children are served if such classes are held in association with elementary schools, because the oral teaching and physical exercises given in the ordinary classes are available for the children. By this system association is fostered between the defective-sighted and normal children. As the children in these classes are of various ages and educational standards individual teaching is essential, and therefore it has been found advisable to limit the number of children in each class. The system of teaching by means of "myope classes" may seem to limit education so far as high scholastic attainment is concerned, but it has been found undesirable to encourage these children to follow a higher education, with the prospect of a sedentary occupation, thus incurring grave risks of serious breakdown later in life. The Council has learnt that in London there are now forty-one "myope classes" providing accommodation for 915 children. In the rest of England, according to the latest information available (Report of Board of Education, 1924, list 42), there are four "myope schools," and provision for other defective-sighted children is made in special classes and in schools for the blind. With a view to obtaining further information a questionnaire has been sent to ophthalmic surgeons practising in seventy-six areas of England, Scotland and Wales, excluding London. The inquiry demonstrates that, with a few notable exceptions, the provision for the education of the affected children is seriously inadequate. It is obvious that in country districts where the number of defective-sighted children is insufficient to form special classes, some provision should be made either to send them to one of those classes in the nearest town or for their teachers to receive instruction in their management. The Council strongly endorses the recommendation of the Departmental Committee on the Causes and Prevention of Blindness "that further provision should be made by education authorities for the education in myope classes or by similar methods for children with serious defects of vision requiring such facilities, and that steps should be taken to discover these cases at such an early age as will allow of preventive measures being adopted." (Report of Department Committee, p. 53.) The Council therefore recommends that: (1) Children with defective sight should be examined periodically by an ophthalmic surgeon, who should prescribe the necessary treatment and educational régime. (2) In all large centres of population special classes should be established for children with such defective sight as renders them un-

suitable for ordinary school education. These classes should be associated with the ordinary elementary schools, and limited to a nominal roll of twenty children to each class. (3) In country districts where there are not sufficient children to form a "myope class," instruction should be given to teachers and parents on the education and management of children with defective sight. Parents and Local Care Committees should receive advice as to the choice of occupation for the children on leaving school. A copy of the Report (price 6d.) can be obtained on application to the Hon. Secretary, Council of British Ophthalmologists, 86, Brook Street. W.1.

MEMORANDA.

The National Council of Women of Great Britain, Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.1, is a body which is accomplishing a notable national service in interesting women in matters relating to Health, Education, Industry, Emigration, Women Police, Rescue Work and Public Services generally. The Council have recently published a 101-page manual, "Women Under English Law," by Maud I. Crofts, M.A., LL.B., a solicitor of the Supreme Court, with foreword by Dame Millicent Fawcett, G.B.E., J.P., LL.D. (price 2s. 6d.). The volume has been published with the assistance of the Stansfeld Trust. The work must be considered an indispensable guide to all desirous of reliable information regarding the legal status of women. It deals with women as citizens, wives, mothers and workers. The concluding chapter treats of offences and actions relating especially to women. A supplementary chapter is provided by Margaret H. Kidd, advocate regarding women under Scots Law.

The League of Nations Union is holding a prize essay contest. Two sets of prizes, 75 dollars, 50 dollars, and 25 dollars, to be known as Seabury Prizes, are offered for the best essays on the following subjects by the League of Nations Union in co-operation with the American School of Citizenship League: (1) "Methods of Promoting World Friendship through Education," open to all under 21 on May 15 attending a training college in the British Isles. (2) "The Organization of the World for the Prevention of War," open to all students between 16-18 years of age on May 15 attending an educational institution in the British Isles. Essays, which must not exceed 5,000 words (length of 3,000 words is suggested), and which must be written on one side only of paper, with a margin of at least one inch, must reach League of Nations Union, 15, Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1, not later than May 15.

The Council of the Royal Colonial Institute, Northumberland Avenue, W.C.2, with a view to encourage the progress of Imperial studies in the schools of the Empire, and among the children of British subjects generally, have decided to award in 1926 medals and prizes for the best essays sent in by boys or girls in three classes: A.—"Discuss the importance of the years 1880—1890 in the History of the British Empire"; B.—"The Empire's Fruit Supply"; C.—(*a*) "Give an account of an Ocean Voyage from a British Port to the Islands of the South Seas, or (*b*) The Wild Beasts of the Empire." The closing date is July 31.

The Food Education Society, which is now quartered at 24, Tufton Street, Westminster, S.W.1 (Tel.: Victoria 7145), continues its efforts to educate the public in dietetics and personal hygiene. Undogmatic in policy, it has the support of leaders of the medical, dental, nursing and educational professions. Dr. Harry Campbell is Chairman, Sir Harry Baldwin Vice-Chairman, Sybil, Viscountess Rhondda, D.B.E., Hon Treasurer, and Mr. Charles E. Hecht Hon. Secretary. There is a constant demand for its publications. "Our Children's Health at Home and at School," "Rearing an Imperial Race," and "The Gateway to Health," are standard works. The Liverpool Corporation recently ordered seven copies of each for their Central and Branch Libraries. A list of the F.E.S. publications may be obtained on application. School medical advisers and all interested in diet problems and the practical arrangements for hygienic feeding of children and adolescents will find the